

Counselor's Corner: October 2021 – “Laughter for Mental Health”

With so much seriousness and stress in our day-to-day lives – who couldn't use a laugh? Laughter has been found to promote health. That's right, laughing is good for the body and mind.

Think about the last time you had a good laugh, I mean a really good one. How did you feel afterwards? If you're like me – you were probably brought to tears. And perhaps your whole body felt relaxed, you probably had a huge smile on your face, and there is an overall feeling of tensions fading away. And if your laugh was shared with other people, you likely felt even more connected to them. There are also a number benefits behind the scenes that can positively impact your mental health and wellbeing. Did you know that laughter has the ability to boost your mood, immunities, and even your relationships? Laughter is so good for our bodies that health programs are actually being developed around it - like [laughter therapy](#) and [laughter yoga](#).

To recap, some positive impacts of laughter include:

- Added joy
- Boosted immunity
- Decreased pain
- Relaxed muscles
- Improved mood
- Lowered blood pressure
- Lowered anxiety & tension
- Stress relief
- Strengthened relationships
- Increased connection with others
- Regulated hormone levels
- Increased heart health

Now that we know how great laughter is - what can we do to bring more laughter into our lives? Check out some ideas below:

- Smile more
- Practice gratitude – what are you thankful for
- Spend time with people that make you laugh
- Watch a funny movie, TV show, or video
- Share a joke with others
- Plan a game night
- Visit a local comedy club

Laughter is free, has no negative side-effects, and can be done just about anywhere. For mental health, laughter truly is one of the best medicines.

“I am thankful for laughter, except when milk comes out of my nose.” – Woody Allen

